

OPINIONS AND DECLARATIONS RENDERED BY THE INTER- NATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

Edited by

FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E.

Secretary to the Commission

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OPINION 240

Correction of an erroneous entry in the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* relating to the type species of the nominal genus *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826 (Class Reptilia)
(correction of an error in *Opinion 92*)



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INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

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OPINION 240

CORRECTION OF AN ERRONEOUS ENTRY IN THE "OFFICIAL LIST OF GENERIC NAMES IN ZOOLOGY" RELATING TO THE TYPE SPECIES OF THE NOMINAL GENUS "MABUYA" FITZINGER, 1826 (CLASS REPTILIA) (CORRECTION OF AN ERROR IN "OPINION" 92)

RULING :—(1) The statement that *Scincus sloanii* Daudin, 1803, is the type species of the genus *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826 (Class Reptilia) made in *Opinion* 92, when the foregoing generic name was placed on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* is incorrect and is hereby deleted from the *Official List*, there being inserted in its place the statement that *Lacertus mabouya* Lacépède, 1788, is the type species of that genus by absolute tautonymy.

(2) The specific name *mabouya* Lacépède, 1788, as published in the combination *Lacertus mabouya*, is hereby placed on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* as Name No. 59.

I.—THE STATEMENT OF THE CASE

The problem dealt with in the present *Opinion* came to notice from two different sources: First, Mr. Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, when examining the older *Opinions* in the course of preparing the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* for publication in book form, noted, on referring to the original literature, that an incorrect statement had been made in *Opinion* 92 regarding the type species of the genus *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826 (Class Reptilia), which would need to be corrected before the *Official List* could be published. Second, at a somewhat later date Senhor Haraldo Travassos (*Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*) submitted a detailed statement on this case for

the consideration of the International Commission. Mr. Hemming's note and Senhor Travassos' paper are given in the immediately following paragraphs.

2. Note dated 4th April 1944 by Mr. Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission : On 4th April 1944 the following note by Mr. Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission, was placed on the File Z.N.(G.) 15, in which papers relating to the proposed publication of the *Official List* in book form were at that time registered :—

“ Mabuya ” Fitzinger, 1826 (“ Opinion ” 92)

By FRANCIS HEMMING

(*Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature*)

In checking the entries made in the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* in the Commission's older *Opinions* with the object of extracting therefrom the particulars which will be needed when the *Official List* is published in book form, I have found that an entirely incorrect entry has been made in *Opinion* 92 (1926, *Smithson, misc. Coll.* 73 (No. 4) : 3—4) regarding the type species of the genus *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826 (*Neue Classif. Rept.* : 23) (Class Reptilia).

2. The facts in this case are as follows :—

(1) In *Opinion* 92 it is stated that the type species of *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826, is “ *Scincus sloanii* Daud., 1803, v. 4, 287.”, i.e. *Scincus sloanii* Daudin, 1802, in Sonnini's Buffon, *Rept.* 4 : 287.

(2) Fitzinger in 1826 did not even place the above species in the genus *Mabuya* Fitzinger ; on the contrary, he cited it as the sole included species in his new genus *Spondylurus* Fitzinger, 1826 (*Neue Classif. Rept.* : Tabl.).

(3) Fitzinger included in his genus *Mabuya* sixteen species, of which the fourteenth is of special interest in the present case. The nominal species in question which is there (: 52) named for the first time, is *Mabuya dominicensis*. Fitzinger indicated by adding in brackets (parentheses) the words “ *Lacertus Mabouya* La Cépède ” that the name *Mabuya dominicensis* was no more than a *nom. nov. pro Lacertus mabouya* Lacépède, 1788 (*Hist. nat. Quad. ovip. Serpens* 1 : Syn. méth.).

(4) In view of (3) above, the type species of *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826, appears to be the nominal species *Lacertus mabouya* Lacépède, 1788, by absolute tautonymy under Rule (d) in Article 30.

3. I have ascertained from Dr. Malcolm Smith (*British Museum (Natural History), London*) that the strict application of the ordinary provisions in the *Règles*, that is, the acceptance of *Lacertus mabouya* Lacépède, 1788, as the type species of *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826, will not lead to any confusion. I am of the opinion, therefore, that there is no need for the Commission in this case to use its Plenary Powers and that all that is required is a supplementary decision by the Commission correcting the erroneous statement in *Opinion 92* regarding the type species of this genus.

3. *Application submitted by Senhor Haraldo Travassos (Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)* : On 12th December 1945, the Secretary received from Senhor Haraldo Travassos (*Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*) a copy of a paper recently published in Portuguese and English, in which Senhor Travassos had discussed the question of the type species of the genus *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826 (Travassos, August 1945, *Bol. Mus. nac., Rio de Janeiro (n.s.) (Zool.) 37* : 1—7). On receipt of this paper, the papers relating to the problem presented by the name *Mabuya* Fitzinger were separately registered under the Number Z.N.(S.) 203. It was agreed in correspondence between the Secretary and Senhor Travassos that the English text of the latter's paper should be treated as constituting his application to the International Commission. Senhor Travassos' application was as follows :—

A note on the type species of “*Mabuya*” Fitzinger, 1826

By HARALDO TRAVASSOS
(*Museu Nacional*)

Fitzinger in 1826 established within his XII family “*Scincoidea*” the genus *Mabuya* for a lizard which presents palatal teeth. In addition to this genus, Fitzinger created other genera, among them *Spondylurus*. In establishing the genus *Mabuya*, page 23, he did not mention on what species he based his description of the same, as he had done with other genera. On the genus *Spondylurus* he made the following statement : “Daudin's *Scincus sloanei*, die einzige bis jetzt bekannte Art dieser Familie, welche Schenkelporen besitzt, ist der Repräsentant meiner Gattung *Spondylurus*, welche einen vortrefflichen Uebergang zu *Tropidosaura* aus der Familie der Lacertoiden bildet, und andererseits in *Mabuya* abfällt”. According to Fitzinger's statement, the genus *Spondylurus* can have only one type species, namely *Scincus sloanei* Daudin, 1803. This is the only species given by the author of the genus ; it is the type species by monotypy.

On page 52, Fitzinger cited the following species :

4. GENUS. *Mabuya*. *Mabuye*.

1. *M. quinquecarinata*. m. Fünfkielige M. (*Scincus quinquecarinatus*. Kuhl.) Ex Asia, India et Insula Java.

2. *M. carinata*. m. Kielschuppige M. (*Scincus carinatus*. Daudin.) Ex Africa Promontorio bonae spei.

3. *M. multifasciata*. m. Vielbänderige M. (*Scincus multifasciatus*. Kuhl.) Ex Asia, Insula Java.

4. *M. trilineata*. m. Dreiliniige M. (*Scincus trilineatus*. Daudin.) Ex Africa, meridionali.

5. *M. dubia*. m. Zweifelhafte M. (*Scincus dubius*, Schreibers.) Ex Australia, Nova Hollandia.

6. *M. capistrata*. m. Gezäumte M. (*Scincus capistratus*, Schreibers.) Ex Africa, Aegypto.

7. *M. longicollis*. M. Langhälsige M. Patria ignota.

8. *M. subcarinata*. m. Schwachkielige M. (*Scincus subcarinatus*. Boie.) Ex Asia, Insula Java.

9. *M. vallata*. m. Verschanzte M. (*Scincus vallatus*. Mus. Paris.) Ex Australia, Insula Decres.

10. *M. quinquetaeniata*. m. Fünfbindige M. (*Scincus quinquetaeniatus*. Lichtenstein.) Ex Africa, Aegypto et Nubia.

11. *M. quinquelineata*. m. Fünfliniige M. (*Scincus quinquelineatus*. Daudin.) Ex America septentrionali.

12. *M. agilis*. m. Behende M. (*Scincus agilis*. Raddi.) Ex America, Brasilia.

13. *M. sancta*. m. Geheiligte M. (*Scincus sanctus*. Kuhl.) Ex Asia, Insula Java.

14. *M. dominicensis*. m. Domingo'sche M. (*Lacertus Mabouya*. La Cépède.) Ex America, Insula St. Dominici.

15. *M. ocellata*. m. Geäugelte M. (*Scincus ocellatus*. Daudin.) Ex Africa, Aegypto et Europa, Sardinia.

16. *M. Serpens*. m. Schlangenartige M. (*Scincus Serpens* Schneider.) Ex Asia, Insula Java.

Of the species included in the genus *Mabuya*, 14 were already known. Fitzinger transferred them to his new genus, making them agree grammatically. To one of these species, the fourteenth, which is *mabouya* La Cépède, he gave a new name (*M. dominicensis*). The two remaining ones are *nomina nuda*. There are several errors in Fitzinger's citations, but these are of no importance in the present context. The species which are of interest to us are the second and the fourteenth, respectively: *Mabuya carinata* (Schneider, 1801) and *Mabuya*

dominicensis Fitzinger, 1826=*Mabuya mabouya* (La Cépède, 1788). Fitzinger cited *carinata* as of Daudin, but that is not correct.

According to the International Rules of Zoological Nomenclature, Article 30 :

The designation of type species of genera shall be governed by the following rules, applied in the following order or precedence : II. Cases in which the generic type is accepted not solely upon basis of the original publication : (e)—The following species are excluded from consideration in determining the types of genera : (a)—Species which were not included under the generic name at the time of its original publication.

As one may observe the type of *Mabuya* can only be one of the 16 species which we have seen above, and not *Scincus sloanei* Daudin, 1803, 4, p. 282, pl. 55, fig. 2 as stated in *Opinion* 92. That *Opinion* places the genus *Mabuya* on the *Official List of Generic Names*, and cites that same genus without giving the slightest explanation concerning it. The above species cannot be accepted as the type species, since that would be contrary to Article 30. The species of Daudin is the type species of *Spondylurus* Fitzinger, 1826, as we have seen.

Upon perusal of the relevant literature, we find that Dunn, 1936 (p. 534) selected, for the type species of *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826, the species *Lacerta mabouya* La Cépède 1788=*Mabuya dominicensis* Fitzinger, 1826 (n. n.)=*Mabuya mabouya* (La Cépède, 1788) Fitzinger, 1826. Dunn established this type species by virtual tautonymy (Article 30, III, i). This species can be and is the type species of the genus *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826.

Therefore, in accordance with the Code, which is indisputable, the type species accepted as the type species in *Opinion* 92 (1926) falls to the selection made by Dunn (1936), although the former is the earlier designated.

Thus the type species of the genus *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826 is as follows :

Lacerta mabouya La Cépède, 1788 2, p. 378, Tab. 24=*Mabuya dominicensis* Fitzinger, 1826 p. 52=*Mabuya mabouya* (La Cépède, 1788) Fitzinger, 1826.

In 1937 Amaral cited the genus *Mabuya* (p. 203) with the following reference to the type species : “ “ Typo : *carinata* ” ”. As we were unable to understand Amaral's selection since we had already seen Dunn's work, we decided to address ourselves to that author, who

replied as follows : “ “ Fitzinger p. 52 (n. 2) registrou como espécie típica ” ”. Amaral was referring to *carinata*. We disagree with Amaral, for, apart from the scientific names, there is only the German word “ Kielschuppige ” which bears the following meaning : “ which has a keeled scale ”. (See list of Fitzinger’s species). Thus, we conclude that the citation by Amaral 1937 is a lapse.

We should like to stress the following fact : even though the Commission which drew up *Opinion 92* considered the species *Scincus sloanei* Daudin, 1803, as synonymous with *Mabuya dominicensis* Fitzinger, 1826=*Mabuya mabouya* (La Cépède, 1788), as some authors have done, the citation given in *Opinion 92* is incorrect and should not have been used, especially in an *Opinion*.

We consider Daudin’s species as distinct from the species *mabouya* La Cépède.

We avail ourselves of this opportunity to make a request to all zoologists that every selection of a type species be always accompanied by an indication stating the reason for the preference given to the species concerned:

II.—THE SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF THE CASE

4. The present was one of a number of cases relating to individual names, summaries of which were given in a paper (Paper I.C. (48) 19), prepared by the Secretary for consideration by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature at its Paris Session in July 1948. The following is an extract from the above Paper of the portion relating to the present case (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 3 : 136) :—

.....

(3) *Type of “ Mabuya ” Fitzinger, 1826 (Class Reptilia) (reference Opinion 92)* : In *Opinion 92* in which the above name was placed on the *Official List*, the type species of the genus was erroneously cited as *Scincus sloanii* Daudin, 1803. This was due to a gross piece of carelessness, since the above species was not only not one of the species originally included in *Mabuya* by Fitzinger but was actually cited by that author in another genus on a different page of the same paper.

Actually, *Lacertus mabouya* Lacépède, 1788, is the type of Fitzinger's genus by absolute tautonymy and is so recognised by specialists in this group. It is proposed to correct this mistake in the edition of the *Official List* shortly to be published.

.....

III.—THE DECISION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

5. The applications submitted in regard to the present case were considered by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature at the Thirteenth Meeting of its Paris Session held at the Sorbonne in the Amphithéâtre Louis-Liard on Monday, 26th July 1948 at 1730 hours. The following is an extract from the Official Record of the Proceedings of the International Commission, setting out the decision reached by it in the present case at the foregoing meeting (Paris Session, 13th Meeting, Conclusion 4) (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 4 : 356) :—

THE COMMISSION agreed :—

- (1) that the statement that *Scincus sloanii* Daudin, 1803, was the type species of *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826 (Class Reptilia) inserted in the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* as the result of a mistake in *Opinion* 92 should be deleted and that in its place there should be inserted a statement that the type species was *Lacertus mabouya* Lacépède, 1788, by absolute tautonymy ;
- (2) to place the trivial name *mabouya* Lacépède, 1788 (as published in the binominal combination *Lacertus mabouya*) on the *Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology* ;
- (3) to render an *Opinion* setting out the decision recorded in (1) and (2) above.

6. The following are the original references for the names which appear in the decision set out in the immediately preceding paragraph :—

Mabuya Fitzinger, 1826, *Neue Classif. Rept.* : 23
mabouya, *Lacertus*, Lacépède, 1788, *Hist. nat. Quad. ovip. Serpens* 1 : Syn. méth.

7. The decision in the present case was reported to, and approved by, the Section on Nomenclature of the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, Paris, 1948, at its Fifth Meeting held on 26th July 1948 (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 5 : 104—105).

8. The Ruling given in the present *Opinion* was concurred in by the sixteen (16) Commissioners and Alternate Commissioners present at the Paris Session of the International Commission, namely :—

Beltrán *vice* Cabrera ; Boschma ; Bradley ; di Caporiacco ; Hemming ; Hindle *vice* Jordan ; Jorge *vice* do Amaral ; Kirby *vice* Stoll ; Lemche *vice* Dymond ; Mansour *vice* Hankó ; Metcalf *vice* Peters ; Riley *vice* Calman ; Rode ; Spärck *vice* Mortensen ; van Straelen *vice* Richter ; Usinger *vice* Vokes.

9. The Ruling given in the present *Opinion* was dissented from by no Commissioner or Alternate Commissioner present at the Paris Session.

10. At the time of the adoption of the Ruling given in the present *Opinion*, the expression prescribed for the second portion of the binomen which constitutes the scientific name of a species was the expression “ trivial name ” and the *Official List* reserved for recording such names was styled the *Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology*, the word “ trivial ” appearing also in the title of the *Official Index* reserved for recording rejected and invalid names of this category. Under a decision taken by the Fourteenth International Congress of Zoology, Copenhagen, 1953, the expression “ specific name ” was substituted for the expression “ trivial name ” and corresponding changes were made

in the titles of the *Official List* and *Official Index* of such names (1953, *Copenhagen Decisions zool. Nomencl.* : 21). The changes in terminology so adopted have been incorporated in the Ruling given in the present *Opinion*.

11. The prescribed procedures were duly complied with by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature in dealing with the present case, and the present *Opinion* is accordingly hereby rendered in the name of the said International Commission by the under-signed Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, in virtue of all and every the powers conferred upon him in that behalf.

12. The present *Opinion* shall be known as *Opinion Two Hundred and Forty (240)* of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

DONE in London this Eleventh day of December, Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Three.

*Secretary to the International Commission
on Zoological Nomenclature*

FRANCIS HEMMING

